

A
LETTER
WRITTEN FROM
OXFORD

BY

Mr. Stephen Colledge
To his Friends in LONDON, &c.

Written by himself, Immediately after his Condemnation.

Gentlemen,

I Believe you are in pain (and well you may be so) to have a just account of this my second Expedition to *Oxford*; which proves indeed so little to my Satisfaction, that I am afraid it will not prove much to yours: However considering that Suspense and Anxiety are so very near of Kin to real and present Evils, and that my Story must needs at last come to your Hands, though by other means; I have thought fit to write it my self, and acquaint you with some things, which being well and seasonably weigh'd, may (I hope) have a particular influence upon your future Conduct and Success.

On the way thither it was my Fortune to encounter a Gentleman and his man: When we came close together, says the Gentleman to his Servant, Ride on you Dogg, for here's such a Stink would poison the Devil. As soon as they were past, I could hear the man ask his Master, what that Company might be, or what they carry'd that Stunk so? To whom his Master reply'd, that they were well-wishers to the *Colledges*, and were carrying that tall Gentleman there to the *University*. What to do, says the man? For in my mind he looks as if he were too old to Learn. Away, away, *Robin*, says his Master, dost not thou remember the Old Proverb, *Live and Learn*. Ay Master, says the man again, *But the Latter-end is, be Hang'd and forget all*.

When I Arriv'd at *Oxford*, I found all the Streets, Windows and Balconies fill'd, as if it had been at a Coronation. I believe if I had but a Shilling from every body that ask'd, *Which is He?* I might with more reason then I could ever hither pretend to, leave off *Joyning* and turn *Statesman*.

Methought at first, it look'd Great, and I was well enough pleas'd with their pointing: But when I considered the occasion, and remember'd that men might be much talk'd of, that were no Saints, I fell into a deep fit of Melancholly, for fear that after-Ages should mention me with *Herostratus* the *Ephesian Dissenter*.

Among other Passages, I took notice of an Old Country-Fellow, which had his Basket of Eggs broke all to pieces in the Crowd; *That wish'd heartily I had been Hang'd the last time I was there*: And a Rogue of a Bed-maker to some of the Colledges that stood by, answer'd him in two words, which I believe was half the *Latine* he had, *Nunquam sera*, that is to say, (says he) *All in good time*.

The Ladies were all very Fine, and I believe had most of them their Best Cloaths on; and I could not perceive above two or three Mourning Gowns among all that Throng of Students:
There

There were some that Shook their Heads, some cry'd 'twas Pity, and some said it was a Proper Fellow, and became a Horse well; to which a Hopeful Youth, with a little Bit of Red-Ribband in his Hat, reply'd, (what e're he meant by it) *I hope shortly to see him become one better.*

There was an Honest Stoick, that had seen me there the last Parliament upon my Charging Horse, and considering earnestly my present Equipage cry'd out pretty Loud, and with a great astonishment, *Quantum mutatus es?* Which the next to him (who I dare Swear was no Whig) made this English of it; *So fare all that hate us.*

As soon as I Lighted from my Horse, (as if Fate had resolv'd to pursue the Humour) I was Conducted to one of the Strongest and Securest Lodgings in the City, and whither she will have me next, God knows, but I am of Opinion I shall go near to stay there, almost as long as I live.

And yet I may tell you that I am not such a retir'd Anchorite, but that I Visit the Great-Hall now and then, and am as much look'd upon, as any man there.

One day I would fain have made them a Set Speech, but the Auditors had no Patience, but minded me of some other little Trivial business, I had there to do; and urg'd me to leave that to the University Orator.

But now methinks it begins to be time to be in good Earnest, and in this Humour let me advise all those that love the Good Old Cause, and Stephen Colledge, to continue Firm and Obstinate in their Opinion, and stand by it with their Lives and Fortunes, which for ought I can see, I am like to do very shortly, even in the Literal Sense.

For not to Mince the matter with you, I think I shall shortly be Translated into the number of the Child-Duborn-Martyrs; for which I would have you rather Prepare then Grieve, always having before your Eyes the old Motto,

Hodie mihi Crastibi.

To give you then in two words an account of a long business, which I know you have no Mind to hear: I have had a very Fair Tryal (as they say;) But I found my Jury here so different from that in London, that I cannot find that they agree in any thing in the World, but only in the Name.

There is here and there they tell me a Censurer, that thinks those Gentlemen knew too Little; but I am sure these know too Much.

I cannot for my Life tell, where the Secret Lyes; whether it be in the Air, or in the Soyl, or in the Will, or in the Understanding; but certain it is (I speak it with Grief) that an Oxford Jury have made a shift in a little time, and with little Trouble, to find a Bill against me (as Dead-doing as that of a Watchman's after midnight) which a London Jury could not for their Lives tell where to look for.

Gentlemen, receive my Last Salutes with as upright and good Hearts, as I send them, and tell Mr. J——y, that if it were in my Power to appoint, no body should have leave to Print my Story but Himself, as well for His sake, as my own: For if any such Fellow as N. T. should Transmit my Memory to Posterity, I shall scarce be Nam'd twice in a Page, without the Appellation of Traytor.

And now Gentlemen to make an end, whatever the Law says, (for I know you look not much upon the Dead Letter) I hope you will believe that I Die like a Good Protestant, and an Honest-Common-Wealths-Man, and that for this only reason, that when the Case comes to be your own, Charity may think her self bound in Honour oblig'd to find some, that may then believe well of you, as you (in despite of Sense and Reason) do now of the

Protestant Joyner.